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Good Morning WB Families:

As we have become accustomed to over the past 5 months, things are changing rapidly around School Reopening. Athletic season bumps and new health metrics have grabbed our attention over this past week. Here at West Branch, we are continuing to work each day to prepare for the 2020-2021 school year, whatever that may look like. Today's communication provides you with some updated information that will help you prepare for the new school year.

Instructional Model Summary: Attached with this communication is the summary document with the information we presented to the Board of Directors at their last meeting. This provides a brief overview of the three models which will define the 2020-2021 school year: 1) Full Reopening with Cyber Option (Hybrid #1), 2) Staggered Day Option (Hybrid #2), and 3) Full Remote. This reiterates much of what we have shared in previous communications but may include some new finer details.

School Opening for Week #1: As per our school calendar, we are scheduled to start school on Thursday, August 27th. Due to all the new procedures associated with COVID-19, we are looking to use the Staggered Schedule just for the first two days of schools. Group A will attend on Thursday, August 27th and Group B will attend on Friday, August 28th. We want to make sure that all the new requirements such as arrival, temperature checks, mask usage, class changes, food services, classroom procedures, and dismissal run smoothly, and students are comfortable with the new arrangements. This will best be accomplished with only half of the students here on that first Thursday and Friday. We will then move to our regular full schedule on Monday, August 31st. We will share the A/B groups and class rosters for your information by next week so you can plan accordingly for those first two days.

Out-of- State Travel: As you may be aware, the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PaDoH) has issued a travel advisory that now includes 18 states. The advisory recommends that people who travel to one of the listed states should self-quarantine for 14 days upon return. While we understand that the declaration is an "advisory" and is not a mandate, public schools are nonetheless expected to comply. If you travel with your children to one of the listed states, upon your return you should, at a minimum, contact your healthcare provider. Describing the details of your trip will enable your physician to determine if a self-quarantine and/or COVID-19 test is warranted. Those students receiving a quarantine advisement from his/her doctor should not attend school for the duration of the quarantine. Please be prepared to provide a copy of your doctor's note to the school for any recommended quarantine or return to school. School work will be provided to students during any period of quarantine.

Mask Requirement: As we have previously shared, masks will be required for students while on the bus, when transitioning within the building, and during select classes (large classes, science lab days, etc.). If a child has a medical reason that prohibits him/her from wearing a mask, a doctor's note will be required prior to the first day of school. These notes should be provided to your child's Principal. For those students who cannot wear a mask for medical reasons, a face shield will be provided. We are aware that we have a very small handful of students with disabilities who may not be able to wear either the mask or face shield and will plan accordingly within those special classrooms.

We are pleased to share with you that our PTO and Community Education Foundation have graciously stepped up to purchase a cloth mask for each student in grades PreK – 12. The District is very appreciative of the generosity of each of these outside groups and hopes this purchase will be helpful for of our families. The distribution of the masks is still under advisement.

Back-up Plans: The time has come for me to gently remind all our families that back-up plans for childcare should be being made at this time. While the District is still hopeful to start school with our Full Reopening with Cyber Option (Hybrid #1), we are nonetheless close to the tipping point where the Staggered Day Schedule may be necessary. As I have stated before, this shift in plans lies, in great part, on our local COVID-19 case data, our ability to social distance students, and parents'/students' compliance with mask requirements. Regardless, every family needs to be prepared for all three educational models which the District may need to use at some point during the year. Whether that is August, or some other time, back-up plans should be considered.

WB Cyber Program: Please be advised that we are beginning the scheduling process for those students who will be participating in the cyber program. Staff will be in touch to review the schedule, arrange for technology pick-up, and share information about logging in and getting courses started when school opens.

I would like to take a moment to thank everyone who has sent us encouraging messages and kind words. It means a great deal to the administration and summer staff as we work to plan for the best possible arrangement for all our students. I will be back in touch as needed over the next two weeks with further updates and new details. In the meantime, questions may be directed to your child/children's Principal.

Micki Dutrow